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TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY GUARDEDLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF
BERLIN PLUS

(U) Classified by Pol-Mil Counselor Timothy Betts, reasons
1.5, b/d.

1. (C) Summary: PolMilOff met with MFA's new DDG for NATO and WEU Affairs Fatih Ceylan January 23 to get a readout of the GOT's latest thinking on ESDP. Ceylan, a longtime NATO policy wonk, was generally satisfied with progress on Berlin Plus, insofar as it was implemented in "Operation Concordia," but noted that Turkey still sought increased prior consultations and better representation in the EUMS. Ceylan seemed lukewarm about a handover of SFOR to the EU, particularly in that Turkey's participation in the Balkans was not certain. End Summary.

2. (C) New MFA DDG for NATO Affairs Fatih Ceylan expressed to PolMilOff January 23 the GOT's belief that implementation of Berlin Plus in "Operation Concordia" had some "bumps in the road," but the GOT remained optimistic that these can be worked out. In particular, the Turks believed that there were not adequate consultations with non-EU Allies prior to the operation, a belief held by even some EU members. But the operation had proved to be a "good test" and the GOT believed that a joint lessons learned process would be useful.

3. (C) Ceylan also expressed concern that representation of non-EU officers in the EUMS was still uncertain. The GOT would like these officers to have permanent passes and a small room within EUMS based on the parameters of the Nice Implementation Document. Because the four non-NATO EU members enjoy more generous involvement in NATO's affairs, Ceylan asserted that the situation was not reciprocal. In fact, he cited this as the only aspect of the Nice Implementation Document that remained unfulfilled. He emphasized that the liaison arrangement in the EU cell at SHAPE was a different thing entirely, and, in fact, Turkey needed both.

4. (C) Ceylan acknowledged the US belief that SFOR should be terminated and the mission handed over to the EU. Nevertheless, he believed a common political will for this event had not yet developed at NATO and should be discussed under Berlin Plus, as the EU mission would have recourse to NATO assets. Ceylan asserted that "consultations and modalities" for a handover remained to be discussed. He expressed hope that the US would support Turkey's desire to maintain a battalion in any follow-on mission. Turkey was frustrated that, on one hand, Turkey was criticized for not contributing more to peacekeeping, and on the other, some EU allies were reluctant to accept Turkey's contribution.

5. (C) Comment: The GOT remains suspicious that the EU wants to cut Turkey out of issues that affect Turkey's national security and undermine the Berlin Plus agreement. Nevertheless, Ceylan was notably sanguine about the progress of Berlin Plus so far. End Comment.

DEUTSCH